UCSF newsbreak

NEWS FOR THE UCSF CAMPUS COMMUNITY VOL. 13, NO. 25 DECEMBER 11, 1998

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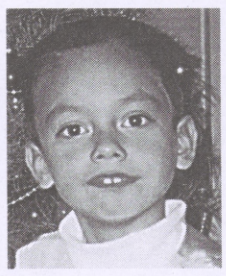
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Boy's Christmas wish asks for gift of life

BY JANET BASU



Minjarez

The only thing seven-year-old Johnathon Minjarez wanted for Christmas last year was a new liver. Fortunately, for him, his wish was granted.

Johnathon suffers from a rare inherited disorder called progressive familial intrahepatic cholestasis that damaged his liver and bile ducts.

And while children as well as adults wait months or years for an organ transplant because of the shortage of donated organs, Johnathon's wait for a transplant was relatively short.

Though he was born with symptoms of liver failure, such as severe itching, most were held at bay for several years while doctors at Lucile Packard Children's Health Services at UCSF treated him with medications and surgery to drain excess bile from his liver.

Then in January 1998, his parents, John and Hong Minjarez, got the call and rushed from their home in Stockton, California, to UCSF, where the transplant surgery was performed. Johnathon's transplant was so successful that by the third day he was riding a bike down the halls of the 6th floor pediatrics ward. "Now he's like any normal seven year old, so full of energy he wears us out," says his mother.

"The transplant has cured him," says his doctor Philip Rosenthal, medical director of pediatric liver transplant services for UCSF Stanford Health Care and professor of pediatrics and surgery at UCSF. "With relatively small doses of immunosuppressive drugs to prevent rejection, he'll be able to grow up and live a normal life."

(SEE WISH ON PAGE 7)



LISA CISNEROS

Bringing beauty to campus

Porcelain wares dating from China's Qing and Ming dynasties and representing a culture deeply in tune with nature and natural elements are on exhibit on the main floor of the UCSF library. Annual library exhibits are sponsored by the Chancellor's Committee on Art, Honors and Recognition, which hopes to inspire donations of fine artworks or funds to enable UCSF to expand its permanent collection and art programs. The current exhibition, "Decorative Motifs in Chinese Porcelains," part of the Avery Brundage Collection, is on loan through December 1999 from the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco. For a glimpse of some of the art located in and around the UCSF campus and satellite locations, see pages 4 and 5.

Researchers alter basic sound processing rate in rats

BY JENNIFER O'BRIEN

Researchers at UCSF report that they have been able to significantly increase the speed with which adult rats process sound, offering important new evidence that the basic rate at which the brain responds to information can be sharply altered by experience.

Their findings, reported in the December issue of "Nature Neuroscience," pave the way for future studies aimed at understanding, and perhaps manipulating, the mechanisms that cause the slow sound-processing difficulties associated with language impairments and dyslexia in children, and such neurological disorders as autism and stroke.

More broadly, the observations offer some of the first evidence of the mechanisms that control the brain's "plasticity" in its reception of information in high speed.

Scientists have known for nearly two decades that the adult brain is capable of rearranging itself to adapt to new conditions, as demonstrated in the growth and strengthening, and loss and weakening, of connections that develop between neurons throughout life. But in the current study, the UCSF researchers have demonstrated that the basic speeds with which the individual neurons of the brain process sound can be altered. And the findings indicate, they say, that neurons that respond to stimuli other than sound could be altered as well.

"Understanding the mechanisms involved in processing speeds and processing rates could aid in the remediation not only of language impairments and possibly dyslexia, but also of any neurological disorder that could be treated by improving the efficiency with which the neurons of the cortex repair, or reorganize, themselves, including damage to the central nervous system," says the lead author of the study, Michael P. Kilgard. Kilgard is a postdoctoral fellow in the laboratory of senior author Michael Merzenich, the Francis A. Sooy Professor of Otolaryngology at UCSF.

The finding is particularly pertinent for children with language impairments and a common form of dyslexia, the researchers say. That overall disorder, characterized in children by difficulty in accurate speech reception and reading, appears to result in large part from an inability to process rapidly successive sounds with normal "processing" speed, which can result in children perceiving blurred speech sounds. Slower processing rates hypothetically result in

(SEE SOUND ON PAGE 7)

Mission Bay campus plans to be up for review

University officials are expected to wrap up the second internal review of the Mission Bay campus master plan by January, so that campus planners will be able to share it with the campus community and public in February.

Final plans for the design of the first building, to be built at Seventh and Owens streets, and design guidelines for the entire 43-acre biomedical research campus at Mission Bay are expected to be presented to the UC Board of Regents for approval in March. The Regental review was postponed two months so that the architectural team could finish working with campus groups on the exterior designs of the first laboratory building, known as building 24.

Both interior and exterior plans for the first building have undergone several revisions in recent months based on campus and community feedback. The architectural firm SMP/SHG Inc. is working on the plans with the newly retained firm Zimmer, Gunsul Frasca to ensure that they are compliant with the master plan guidelines developed by master planners Machado and Silvetti Associates Inc., and Gordon H. Chong & Partners.

Campus officials are developing a capital improvement budget and financing plan for the campus, which will also be presented to the Regents at their meeting in March.

UCSF will receive $21.4 million from the voter-approved bond measure Proposition 1A to help finance the first building, to cost in the range of $200 million.

The University's financing plan also calls for using gifts from donors, campus reserves and auxiliary enterprise and other revenues and external financing to pay for construction. The entire project is expected to cost more than $1 billion over the 15- to 20-year construction time frame.

In October, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors approved ordinances and resolutions authorizing development of the entire 303-acre project and the donation of land to UCSF by the City. The City will contribute a total of 13.23 acres of land, including former street areas, to the Regents for the construction of the UCSF Mission Bay campus. Catellus Development Corporation, the primary developer of Mission Bay, has already agreed to contribute about 29.27 acres to the UCSF campus.

The first building will house more than 900 people, including researchers who will conduct advanced research in areas such as cell development, structural biology and chemistry.

The University still plans to break ground on the site in September 1999 with the first occupants to move into the building in late 2002.

Meanwhile, a group of faculty continues to work on a plan to revitalize and reorganize research on the Parnassus campus.

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UCSF gets grant to support women's research

BY ABBY SINNOTT

To help support research relevant to women's health and to develop the next generation of strong physician-researchers in this area, the National Institutes of Health recently granted UCSF $2.2 million to establish a Women's Reproductive Health Research (WRHR) Career Development Center.

"This new center's mission is to promote health and prevent disease in women by expanding the pool of well-trained, imaginative, productive investigators in the field of women's reproductive health," says Robert N. Taylor, UCSF professor in the department of obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive sciences. Taylor will serve as the program's associate director. "This program also will foster successful collaboration among obstetrician-gynecologist researchers and those in other disciplines, such as physiology, epidemiology and biostatistics."

Traditionally, the amount of federal funding to support research in the area of women's health has been significantly lower than funds granted to other areas of medical research, he says.

Physicians who have recently completed postgraduate clinical training in obstetrics and gynecology and are beginning research relevant to women's health will be eligible for the center's program that includes biomedical and clinical research. Based on their research interest, each chosen scholar will be assigned a primary mentor who is an established scientist to help pursue a research project, as well as a team of mentors to oversee the scholar's professional development, Taylor says.

Scholars also will have the opportunity to draw from the wide breadth of investigative women's health research conducted at UCSF to enhance their training experience and accelerate progress within their fields of investigation. Research in the areas of ovarian cancer, abnormal uterine bleeding, cervical cancer, preeclampsia, urinary incontinence, and prenatal diagnostic testing is currently under way at UCSF.

In addition to specific mentored research projects, scholars will participate in seminars and a curriculum designed to build specific knowledge and skills in biomedical and/or clinical research. Career planning, education about ethical issues, and scientific manuscript and grant writing are also integral elements of the training program.

The center will recruit up to four scholars per year to participate in the biomedical and clinical research programs. Successful candidates will be the best trained and most accomplished and promising obstetrician-gynecologists who are committed to productive investigative research; have an outstanding academic record; have spent at least three-quarters of their time conducting research during undergraduate and medical school; and have strong letters of recommendation, according to Taylor.

Nancy Padian, UCSF associate professor in the departments of obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive sciences and epidemiology and biostatistics will serve as associate program director. Robert B. Jaffe, UCSF professor, department of obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive sciences and director of the UCSF Reproductive Endocrinology Center, will serve as program director. A. Eugene Washington, chair of the UCSF department of obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive sciences is the principal investigator of the center. An eight-member advisory committee comprised of UCSF faculty will provide advice and support. Twenty-four UCSF faculty members who have successfully conducted funded research will act as mentors to center scholars.

PRIVATE SUPPORT

UCSF is pleased to acknowledge the following gifts/ pledges of $25,000 or more from individuals, corporations and foundations received November 15-28, 1998.

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ASSISTANT VICE CHANCELLOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS:
Carol Fox

EXECUTIVE EDITOR:
Jeff Miller

EDITOR:
Lisa Cisneros

CONTRIBUTORS:
Paula Murphy, Nancy Heller and the UCSF News Services staff

COPY EDITOR:
Daniel Rowe

SENIOR DESIGNER:
Martha Fitzgerald

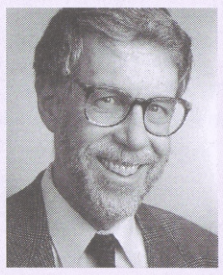
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appointments



Fields

Fields directs addiction center

Howard L. Fields, professor of neurology, physiology and psychiatry, has been appointed director of the UCSF Center for the Neurobiology of Addiction.

Haile Debas, dean of the School of Medicine, announced the appointment effective Dec. 1.

Fields, who received his MD and PhD degrees from Stanford University, joined the UCSF School of Medicine faculty in 1972. He is one of the founding members of the UCSF Neuroscience Program, founder of the UCSF Pain Management Clinic and director of the Neurology Pain Research Program project and Training Program.

Fields is both a clinician and a basic scientist, a combination that makes him uniquely qualified to head the addiction center, Debas says. While the focus will be on basic research, the center's goal is to contribute to the development of new therapeutic approaches for addiction.

In recent years, researchers have approached addiction as a disease of the brain with complex social and behavioral components.

Fields and the scientists associated with the addiction center believe that a more complete biological explanation of the problem of addiction is an important step towards improved treatment. The current explosive growth in neurobiology combined with the excellence of UCSF's neuroscience faculty made this a particularly opportune time to establish a focused research program in addiction at UCSF.

Fields succeeds Robert Malenka, who is moving to the Stanford University School of Medicine where he will be the Pritzker Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science and direct the Pritzker Laboratory.

SFGHMC program wins state recognition

A program at San Francisco General Hospital Medical Center (SFGHMC) designed to reduce the number of emergency department visits by "high-user" patients has received another top award, this time from the California Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems (CAPH).

The award was presented during the CAPH two-day annual conference held Dec. 2-4 in San Francisco.

The CAPH "management excellence award" honors the Emergency Department Case Management Program at SFGHMC. Now three years old, the program has shown early success in reducing the number of emergency visits, saving costs, and supporting patients through social services.

The program is directed by Robert Okin, chief of psychiatric services at SFGHMC and UCSF professor of psychiatry, and Alicia Boccellari, director of SFGHMC psycho-social medicine and UCSF associate professor of psychology. Kathy O'Brien is program coordinator, and James Oh is medical director.

In presenting the award, CAPH officials noted that the approach is a "winning strategy from both a quality of services and financial viewpoint."

The program picked up a national award from the National Association of Public Hospitals at its annual meeting in July.

New light on hair color and cancer

Researchers at UCSF report good news for the large proportion of American women, and some men, who use hair color products.

In a study that included 4,108 participants, researchers found that there is no association between normal use of hair color products and risk for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (NHL), the fifth most common cancer in the US among both women and men.

"The results of our study, the largest one ever conducted in this area, will hopefully make the large proportion of American women who color their hair feel much more comfortable about using these products," says Elizabeth Holly, UCSF professor of cancer epidemiology studies.

Epidemiological studies have provided conflicting reports regarding the association between hair color use and cancer, Holly says. While early laboratory animal studies found that many hair color products were carcinogenic to varying degrees, subsequent research on hair color components found that, with normal use, these products do not cause cancer in humans.

Over the past 20 years, the Food and Drug Administration has discontinued some hair color products that were considered carcinogenic in animals.

Drug relieves shingles symptoms

An epilepsy drug has provided significant relief from the aching, burning, tearing pain that some shingles patients suffer for years after other symptoms subside, according to results of a clinical trial conducted at UCSF.

Soon after the anti-convulsant medicine gabapentin came into use in 1995 to treat epilepsy, physicians noted its pain-relieving powers.

Shingles, caused by the virus Herpes zoster, results from the reactivation of the chickenpox virus and attacks more than a million people in the US each year. While the shingles rash and pain eventually subside in most people, about 10 to 15 percent experience continued severe pain known as postherpetic neuralgia, or PHN, which can last years.

Tricyclic antidepressants are the principal drug used to treat PHN pain, but they don't work for more than half of those who try them, and many cannot tolerate their side effects. In contrast, gabapentin appears to be at least as effective as tricyclic antidepressants, and its side effects are often better tolerated.

"Gabapentin appears to affect a completely different aspect of the nerve cell circuitry involved in chronic pain than do opioids (morphine-like drugs) and tricyclic antidepressants, the main drugs currently used to treat severe nerve damage pain," says UCSF neurologist Michael Rowbotham.

"This report should help physicians become more aware of the effective treatments available for chronic neuropathic pain. It will give more choice in what can be used to relieve pain, particularly for the elderly. And it should also inspire pharmaceutical companies to look for new treatments that are effective and well tolerated."

Tau gene linked to neurodegenerative disorders

Researchers led by a UCSF neurologist report that they have identified three mutations in a gene that produces the tau protein, and have determined that these mutations cause several related hereditary neurodegenerative diseases, the most prevalent known as frontotemporal lobe dementia.

While the finding does not directly implicate the *tau* gene in Alzheimer's disease, it does so strongly by association, says Kirk Wilhelmsen, an assistant professor of neurology at UCSF.

The tau protein has long been a suspected factor in Alzheimer's disease, because abnormal, insoluble, tangled filaments of the protein are always found in the autopsied brains of people who have the disease. But because researchers have never found a mutation in the *tau* gene of Alzheimer's patients, they had come to think that the neurofibrillary tangles, composed primarily of tau protein, were but an inconsequential by-product of some other factor that actually caused nerve cell degeneration.

Now that there is hard evidence that tau, itself, is capable of killing brain cells, the picture changes, says Wilhelmsen. "Finding a direct link between mutations in the *tau* gene and these hereditary neurodegenerative diseases strongly indicates that tau is an important player in neurons dying in Alzheimer's disease and many other diseases, as well," he says.

The goal now, he says, is to figure out what causes tau protein to accumulate in insoluble filaments in the brain cells of Alzheimer's patients.

Besides offering new direction for exploring Alzheimer's disease, of course, the findings might provide a model for understanding how other abnormal protein filaments might kill cells in a range of diseases, including other sporadic dementias, Parkinson's disease and Huntington's disease, says Wilhelmsen.

UCSF ushers in new era of arthritis research and treatment

BY DIANA MARSZALEK

To accelerate the introduction of more effective, safer treatments for arthritis, UCSF has established a special research center for testing promising experimental drugs for the disease.

The Rosalind Russell New Arthritis Treatment Program offers patients innovative therapies that target specific cells known to promote inflammation and joint damage. The program was established with major financial support from the Rosalind Russell Arthritis Center, which has played a key role in funding research on arthritis at UCSF for 20 years.

Arthritis, the world's number-one crippler, afflicts more than 40 million Americans, and that figure is expected to grow dramatically as baby boomers age. Current treatments, such as medications, are only partially effective and they can cause serious, sometimes fatal, side effects.

"The kinds of treatments we're testing represent the first real potential for genuine breakthroughs in more than a generation," says UCSF Stanford Health Care rheumatologist David Wofsy, UCSF professor of medicine and director of the New Arthritis Treatment Program. "The revolutionary developments in molecular and cell biology over the last ten to 15 years are finally beginning to pay off in a new generation of arthritis treatments that promise fewer side effects and greater effectiveness."

Eventually, between five and ten clinical trials will be conducted simultaneously at the New Arthritis Treatment Program, Wofsy says.

Two studies are currently under way. One involves patients with rheumatoid arthritis, which is the most crippling form of the disease and affects about 2.5 million people. Its purpose is to compare the effectiveness of a treatment, called TNF receptor, with methotrexate, the current standard treatment. This trial is being conducted as part of a nationwide effort that has led to preliminary approval of the new treatment by the Food and Drug Administration.

The other current clinical trial is the first test of a promising new treatment for systemic lupus, a potentially life-threatening form of arthritis. This treatment was initially available only at UCSF.

Additional clinical trials for lupus, rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis are expected to be launched in the first half of 1999 at the Rosalind Russell New Arthritis Treatment Program.

Current studies focus on rheumatoid arthritis and systemic lupus erythematosus. Call 502-1698 for more information.

DHEA benefits heart function

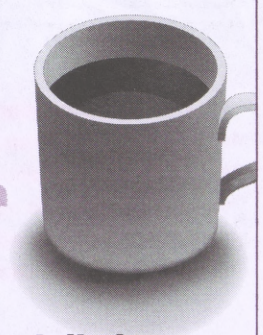
DHEA, the popular hormone widely sold as a nutritional supplement to fight conditions from cancer to aging, does have a beneficial effect on the vascular function of the heart, a new UCSF study shows.

Though there has been limited scientific basis for claims that DHEA (dehydroepiandrosterone) is a potent anti-disease and anti-aging drug, a study conducted with pigs shows that the hormone does protect the heart against some cardiovascular diseases.

More scientific work needs to be done to make sure the hormone is both safe and beneficial, says UCSF cardiology research fellow Christian Zellner, who conducted the study at UCSF's Vascular Lab.

No human studies examining the cardiac effects of DHEA have been completed, which is essential before any recommendations involving the drug can be made, he says.

Scientists suspect DHEA – which is synthesized by our own bodies, is converted into the hormones estrogen and testosterone and decreases sharply with age – does indeed have a link to conditions including aging, heart disease and cancer.

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ucsf art *in public places*

By its very nature, public art is intended to provoke comment, stir ideas and emotions. Public art at UCSF, however, often goes unnoticed. Although far from a complete view of all of the art that exists at UCSF's many sites, we offer this sampling to raise awareness of the creative expressions that exist in our midst.

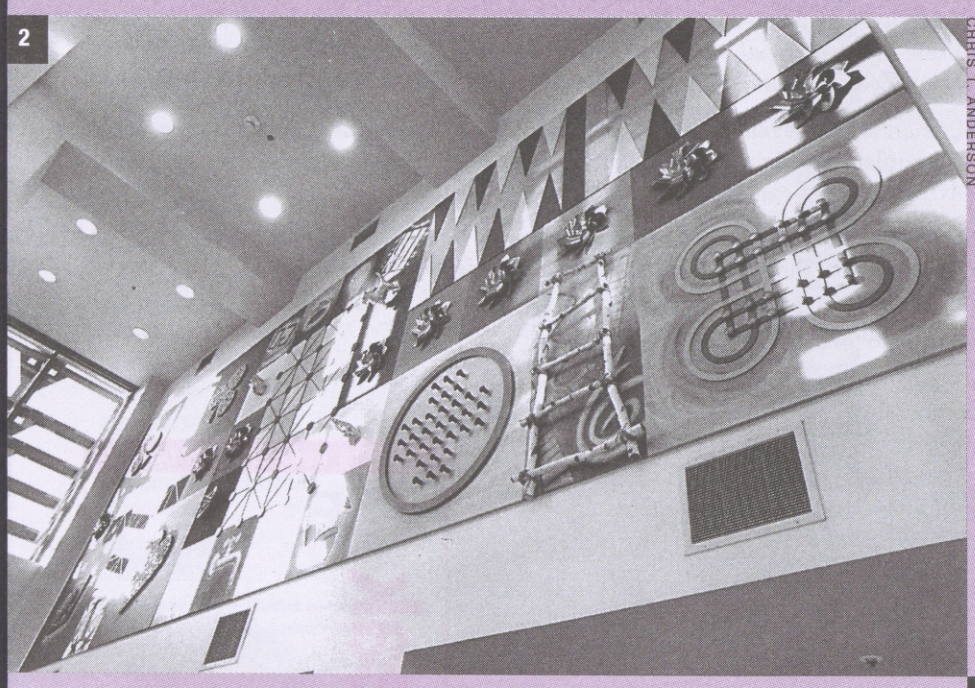
1



CHRIS T. ANDERSON

1 This colorful mosaic decorates a wall around an air vent on the third floor outside the courtyard at San Francisco General Hospital Medical Center.

2



CHRIS T. ANDERSON

2 One of the best collections of modern art at San Francisco General Hospital Medical Center is located in the mental health rehabilitation facility. Hilda Shum's playful and uplifting piece "Games of the World" graces the entrance of the facility. This piece is part of a collection representing diverse cultures made possible by a public arts program funded by a 1987 bond measure and administered by the San Francisco Arts Commission.

3 A wall embedded with 400 tiles, made by cancer patients and their families and friends lines the hallway outside the Ida and Joseph Friend Resource Center at the UCSF Cancer Center. Each tile has an image of a pressed flower or plant and a personal message that describes the emotions of patients and their loved ones when faced with a life-threatening illness.

3



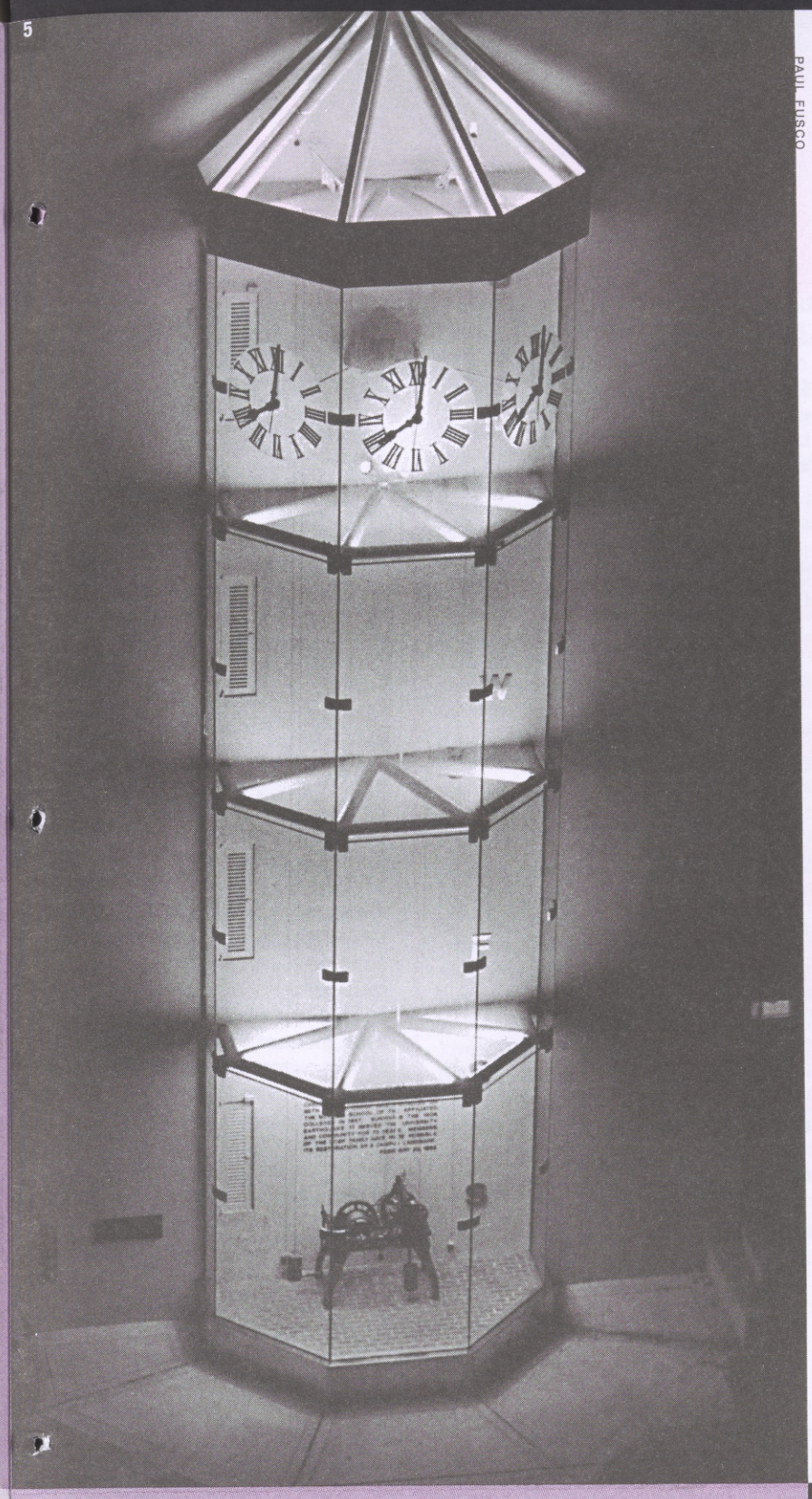
LISA CISNEROS

4



PAUL FUSCO

4 Beniamino "Benny" Bufano created the "Mother Bear and Two Cubs," a stone sculpture located outside the UCSF library. The statue is a gift to the University from Dr. and Mrs. Schindler.



PAUL FUSCO

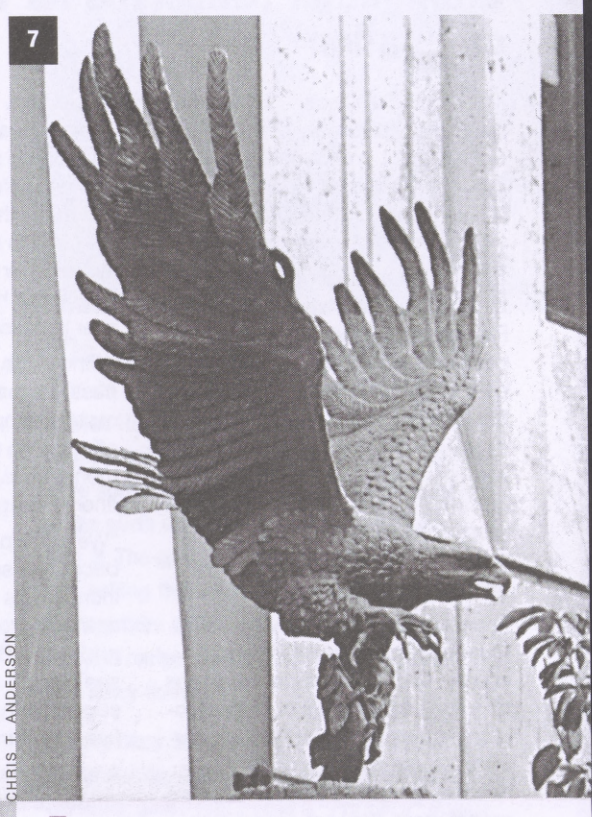
5 A historic landmark at UCSF, the Founders Clock is reported to have been carried by ship around Cape Horn. Made by Seth Thomas, the clock was originally installed on a building of the Medical School of the Affiliated Colleges in 1897. Surviving the 1906 earthquake, the timepiece served the University and neighborhood for 70 years until the building that held it was razed in 1967. The clock was kept in storage until 1982 when a campaign orchestrated by "friends of the clock" raised money to completely rebuild the mechanism and mount the entire piece to the five-story east wing of the Millberry Union where it stands today.



DAVID POWERS

6 The ten frescoes of Toland Hall painted by Bernard Baruch Zakheim depict the colorful and controversial history of medicine in California. An artist commissioned in 1936 by the late Chauncey D. Leake, the founder of the department of pharmacology, Zakheim selected the medium of fresco (earthen colors applied to wet plaster) to complement the semi-circle auditorium, designed by Lewis P. Hobart in 1917. For reasons including the belief that the works were a distraction, the University covered the paintings with wallpaper for 20 years, seriously compromising them. Despite a protest from artists around the world, the murals stayed hidden until 1962. The murals were then restored in 1967 by Zakheim's son Nathan.

This panel depicts pioneers of UCSF, including Lucy Wanzer, far left, the medical school's first woman student. She holds testes in one hand and ovaries in the other as a sardonic comment on the fight by women for equal education more than a century ago. UC adopted a policy to admit women in medical school in 1874. Also shown in the center, from left, are William Kerr, Langley Porter, Herbert C. Moffitt and Frank Lynch.



CHRIS T. ANDERSON

7 A 4-foot bronze eagle sculpture that sits atop a 10-foot black granite column adorns the entrance to the San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center. The statue is a gift from Vietnam veteran Roy T. Maloney of San Francisco to honor the men and women who served in the US armed forces during that conflict.



CHRIS T. ANDERSON

8 Harriet G. Moore's bronzed sculpture of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing, sits at the entrance of the UCSF School of Nursing. The piece was commissioned in 1983 as a gift from Constantine Raises of San Francisco. Interestingly, Kathy Balestreri, now administrative director for UCSF Stanford Health Care, was the original model for the artist, but Balestreri's young look didn't capture Nightingale's image. The artist remade the sculpture based on old photographs of the nursing pioneer.



CHRIS T. ANDERSON

9 Diego Rivera's "La Tortillera," depicting a woman making tortillas, was painted in 1926 and now hangs in the lobby at San Francisco General Hospital Medical Center, where it is enclosed in a thick protective case. His wife, Frida Kahlo's 1931 painting "Portrait of Dr. Leo Eloesser" also hangs in the lobby. Both oil paintings were given to UCSF for display at SFGHMC where their original owner, Eloesser, served for 36 years. A fan of the arts, Eloesser first met Rivera in Mexico in the 1920s. Both Rivera and Kahlo lived and worked in San Francisco in 1930-31 and during their stay, Eloesser treated Kahlo for chronic medical problems she suffered as a result of an earlier bus accident. As a token of their friendship, and to repay him for his service, Kahlo painted Eloesser's portrait at his home.



CHRIS T. ANDERSON



Dave Bohler

Grandfather conserves for the next generation

Many San Franciscans are inspired by the natural beauty of the Presidio. But unlike most, Dave Bohler, manager of UCSF's Facilities Management Utilities Division, actually helped to preserve it.

As building manager of the Letterman Army Institute of Research for 20 years — a 500,000-square-foot medical research facility behind the Letterman Hospital near the eastern gate — Bohler became an energy conservation, water purity and chemical safety control expert. Since the Presidio base closure five years ago, Bohler has brought his mechanical engineering skills to bear on UCSF's vast energy enterprise.

The projects that occupy his daily rounds — such as retrofitting energy- and water-efficient systems to reduce the amount of chlorofluorocarbons released into the atmosphere — are not high-profile or headline-grabbing. But in ways that matter most, they are essential to the leadership position he feels UCSF should assume in energy awareness. "That is why the campus Energy Awareness Campaign is so critical," he says. "New technology and new information systems have increased the amount of electricity we need to do our jobs. And installing air conditioning on Parnassus has contributed to an ever increasing usage."

Without the two-year-old awareness campaign, which has promoted campuswide conservation efforts with rewards and environmental fairs, Bohler contends that energy usage would be even higher.

"We can't prove it empirically because usage continues to increase as a result of normal campus growth and technological additions. But what we hear and see people doing around campus suggests that at least, we are keeping it in check."

And with more than 20,000 faculty, students and staff at UCSF's many sites, the energy-saving actions of individuals and small units can make an important contribution. At the Presidio research facility, for example, a similar awareness helped to cut energy and water usage by 15 percent.

Bohler is aware, of course, that in becoming the campaign director, he must practice what he preaches. He does not disappoint. Apart from turning off all unnecessary computers, printers, copiers, and lights over nights and weekends, and especially when he is going on vacation, Bohler has installed energy-efficient lighting and motion sensors in his office and home.

He also has installed low-flow shower nozzles and when purchasing new home appliances, such as a refrigerator, freezer, or a dishwasher, made the energy-efficient labels an important factor in his purchase. And while he can no longer readily take public transportation from his Novato home to his UCSF job — something he did almost daily during his 20-year Presidio tenure — he stills tries to take mass transit as often as possible. Much to the chagrin of his wife, he also keeps his thermostat turned down to 68 degrees and then wears sweaters and coats in the house instead. Not surprisingly, he also turns off the heat at night and uses extra heavy blankets for warmth.

"As a father of four and a grandfather of eight, I really believe in the quote from the Great Law of the Iroquois Confederacy that we are using in the Energy Awareness Campaign, In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations.'"

Apply now for employee training

Employees can apply now for the Management Skills Assessment Program (MSAP) and Professional Skills Assessment Program (PSAP), unique staff development programs for employees from the northern UC campuses.

The programs assess career related skills and identify activities for future career development.

The next MSAP will run from May 4 to 7, 1999. The fee is $675. The PSAP will run from March 23 to 26, 1999, and the fee is $480.

Through simulated work activities, these programs familiarize employees with the range of managerial or professional skills needed for higher level positions, increase their awareness of their current skill levels, and provide practice in describing their behavior and others' objectively. UC managers participate as assessors, providing direct feedback to employees on their performance.

MSAP is for career employees at the level of team-leading or supervising AA-III or equivalent, up to and including MSO II or equivalent. PSAP is for career employees at the level of non-supervising AA I-III or equivalent.

Both programs are competitive and applicants must be nominated and strongly supported by their supervisors.

To receive an application packet contact Linda Watkins, HR training specialist, by calling 476-4032.

campus notes

Feed the hungry

The San Francisco and Second Harvest food banks have supplied UCSF with food barrels to help feed the hungry. The food barrels will remain at various campus locations, including the School of Dentistry lobby, Moffitt cafeteria, and Millberry Union, until Friday, Jan. 8.

Most-needed items are pure fruit juice, tuna, and plastic jars of peanut butter.

Nominees sought for advancement of women award

Now is the time to nominate a colleague, co-worker, mentor, or student for the 1999 Chancellor's Award for the Advancement of Women. Nomination forms are due in the Chancellor's Office by 5 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 11.

This annual award recognizes one academic/faculty member, one staff member, and one student, resident, or postdoc for their contributions to the advancement of women at UCSF. Each recipient will receive $2,000.

Nomination forms are available in the Chancellor's Office at S 126, or on the Chancellor's Office website, under Chancellor's Awards, at www.chancellor.ucsf.edu

Award recipients will be announced in February, and will receive their awards at a presentation ceremony held during Women's History Month in March. For more information, call Ruth Weiller at 476-4223 or email her at rweiller@chanoff.ucsf.edu.

Barclay and company move to Laurel Heights

Steve Barclay, Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance, and his immediate staff have moved to new offices at the Laurel Heights site, 3333 California Street, Suite 325.

Their campus mailing address is Box 0288. Their phone and fax are 476-4148 and 476-4147 respectively.

Others who will make the move to the same location are Associate Vice Chancellor, Administration, William J. Neff, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Finance Bob Obana, and Assistant Vice Chancellor, Information Technology, Terry Johnson.

Call for applications

The Academic Senate Committee on Research is seeking applications for a number of grants to be awarded next year.

The committee provides funds up to $40,000 for shared equipment when other funding sources are not available or are limited. Consideration is given to large groups of investigators with partial or matching funds from their departments and other sources. An application must have at least three or more independent investigators, not necessarily from the same department. Application deadline for this grant is Monday, Jan. 11 at 4 p.m.

Travel grants are awarded exclusively to Academic Senate members on a first-come, first-served basis. The travel request form with documentation must be submitted to the Committee on Research prior to the commencement of travel. The maximum per year is $500 to help defray airfare expense to scholarly meetings to present research.

Grant awards of up to $30,000 are also available to individual investigators for research. The application deadline is April 1 at 4 p.m. For eligibility criteria on this grant and for more information about the others, contact Annie Bruster at 476-1308 or email her at bruster@itsa.ucsf.edu.

International study grants available

The National Security Education Program (NSEP) offers fellowships to graduate and professional school students to master their understanding of languages and cultures not commonly studied in the US. The fellowships are highly flexible and students design a program that meets their educational requirements and interests. Intensive language study must be the major component of the fellowship, but proposals may include other components, such as research or clinical experience. Programs may begin no earlier than fall 1999 and no later than summer 2000. NSEP encourages applications from students in sciences and other fields that traditionally have not had an international focus. The application deadline is Friday, Jan. 15. For applications see the NSEP website at www.aed.org/nsep or visit UCSF International Academic Programs at 145 Irving St., Suite 103, or call 502-2962.

Nominations due for two University service awards

Nominations are being accepted for the Chancellor's Award for Exceptional University Service and, a newly instituted award this year, the Chancellor's Award for Exceptional University Management.

The nomination deadline is Friday, Jan. 22.

Both awards recognize non-academic employees who have consistently performed in their University positions at a level beyond what is ordinarily expected. Details and criteria are described in the nomination form which has recently been distributed to the campus community. The award includes a certificate and a check for $3,000 (before taxes) which will be presented at the Founders Day Awards Luncheon on Tuesday, April 20. Nomination forms may be obtained from Human Resources (main reception desk at Laguna Honda or any HR division), the Chancellor's Office, via the HR website (www.ucsfhr.ucsf.edu), or by calling Joanne Fraysse at 476-4285.

medical call board

Red blood cell

Volunteers are needed for a study of the effects of a new method of inactivating viruses and bacteria that may contaminate donated blood products. The study involves a donation of whole blood, a small infusion of the participant's own donated blood, and blood draws. Estimated total time involved in the study is six hours over a two-month period. Participants must be in good health and 18 years of age or older. Women must be post-menopausal or have had a hysterectomy or tubal ligation. Volunteers completing the study will be paid $300. Please call 502-1564 for more information.

Female bleeding

Women who have "heavy" menstrual periods with no known cause and are 18-50 years old, may be eligible for a study at UCSF that will test for a bleeding disorder called von Willebrand's Disease. The study involves a questionnaire and blood test. Volunteers will be paid for their time. Those interested should call 502-1564 for more information.

Chronic Hepatitis B treatment

Pediatric hepatologists at UCSF have begun enrolling children aged 2 to 18 in a clinical trial of a new oral agent, lamivudine, for children with chronic hepatitis B.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the potential role of lamivudine to eradicate chronic hepatitis B in children. Hepatitis B is a viral disease that may cause chronic inflammation, scarring, cirrhosis, and even cancer in the livers of those infected.

Currently, the only approved drug for the treatment of chronic Hepatitis B in children is interferon, a treatment that requires injections three times weekly. For more information on the trial at UCSF, call 476-5892.

Osteoporosis

Researchers need healthy women who are more than one year past menopause and who are not taking estrogen or other medicines that affect bones for an eight-week nutrition study to determine whether the amount of salt people eat in their food affects their bones. Participants will be paid. For more information, call 597-4892.





PHOTOS BY LISA CISNEROS

'Tis the season to shop

Patricia Coray, top left, and her husband Patrick Henderson of the Institute for Health Policy Studies, serve up some of their popular olive and garlic spread, "Olivetta," to shoppers at the ninth annual holiday crafts fair on Dec. 3. The couple has been preparing, jarring and selling their spread for four of the past five holiday fairs at UCSF. A variation of a New Orleans recipe, the spread comes in regular and spicy flavors.

Jimmy Choy, bottom left, a member of the Asian Pacific American Systemwide Alliance (APASA), gives Tom Evans a "Princess" Beanie Baby. Evans, who works for ITS, was one of the winners of the small stuffed toys in APASA's raffle drawing. The raffle was a fundraiser for APASA, an organization that addresses issues affecting Asian Pacific Americans on UC campuses and sponsors activities that foster cultural appreciation.

(SOUND FROM PAGE 1)

weaker than normal phonics abilities because they don't allow words to be parsed into sound parts with normal efficiency.

Notably, the UCSF findings in rats parallel observations that Merzenich and colleagues have recently made in dyslexic children who participated in a computer training program designed to improve the accuracy with which they received high-speed speech.

The program motivates children to practice making distinctions between rapidly presented sounds. It is based on the idea that intensive training can be used to restore even severely degraded high-speed brain-processing capacities. After a little more than a month of practice using this program, most children in the study improved by one to two grade levels in their language abilities.

The study in rats demonstrates why the computer program works, the researchers say. While in the study in children they relied on external stimuli to stimulate the internal change, in the rat study the investigators directly targeted the neurons that signal the importance of sensory stimuli. These neurons are found in a structure of the brain known as the nucleus basalis.

When the nucleus basalis detects a sound that it deems pertinent, such as the cry of a child, rather than, say, the rush of the wind, it dispatches acetycholine, a chemical signal, into the cortex, signaling it to "save" its representation of that sound.

In their study, the researchers electrically stimulated the nucleus basalis and simultaneously exposed the animals to rapidly presented sound. The sound was a train of tones presented at fifteen beats per second. (Before beginning their study, the researchers determined that the rats' auditory neurons could not keep up with a train of tones presented at more than 12 sounds per second.) In rats, researchers have determined, the cortex requires about a tenth of a second to recover from one sound before it is ready to respond again. The human cortex appears to function similarly.

In the rats, the researchers repeated the combination of electrical stimulation of the nucleus basalis and the exposure to the sounds for several hours each day for a month. The responses of individual neurons were then recorded and compared to neurons from unstimulated animals.

Significantly, although the vast majority of neurons in normal animals did not respond to trains of tones presented at 15 beats per second, the neurons in stimulated animals were able to keep up without difficulty.

The researchers went on to show that they could also train the neurons to process sound more slowly than normal, pairing the electrical stimulation with a rate of sound of five beats per second. In many cases, the maximum rate of response was cut in half.

(WISH FROM PAGE 1)

The worst part about his illness, Johnathon says, was the itching, caused by bile backed up from his bile ducts. It was so constant that he scarred himself with scratching, and it would not stop, no matter what medications and salves his parents tried. The yellow color of jaundice in his skin was so bright that people stared at him in stores and a little girl once taunted him: "Look at him! He's all yellow! He's an ugly boy!"

With the itching and the teasing and his constant fatigue, Johnathon had to drop out of school and be tutored at home. His parents and doctors worried that he was not growing as his damaged liver stopped absorbing the fats from his diet.

But the liver transplant has turned things around. Johnathon's wait was shorter than many patients awaiting organs, in part because he was first listed to receive a liver when he was still a baby. His transplant was deferred for a few years when other methods seemed to work. Johnathon also lives in a region where transplant waiting times in general are short — even though the transplant centers do not handle pediatric cases. He was transplanted at UCSF — 80 miles away from his home, but in a region where patients can wait as long as three years for a transplant.

New criteria for the nation's organ allocation system, soon to be published by the Department of Health and Human Services, would even out the wait for transplant organs somewhat. But Johnathon's parents stress that the only real solution for transplants is to encourage more families to donate the organs of their loved ones who die.

For the Minjarez family, that need is still real. While Johnathon's older brother Anthony, 9, is fine, his baby sister Marissa, who celebrated her first birthday last month, has the same rare liver disease.

That may be why, when Johnathon turned seven in August, his birthday wish was not much different from his Christmas wish: "I just want Marissa to be all right," he said.

calendar

Dec. 12, 1998-Jan. 8, 1999

DECEMBER 1998

12 saturday

LOW FAT COOKING WORKSHOP: Millberry Programs & Services presents Christine Leishman, meal planning specialist and former assistant chef at Greens & Stars Restaurants, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., 5th & Irving. Learn to make practical, palate-pleasing dishes that are healthy too! This workshop includes a meal preparation session and handouts. Cost: $32/34/36. For more information, call 476-1115.

14 monday

HAPPY HANUKKAH!

HEALTH POLICY SEMINAR: Guillermo Canto presents "The Health Care System in Guatemala," noon-1:30 p.m. 1388 Sutter St., Suite 1100. Sponsored by the Institute for Health Policy Studies and the Institute for Health & Aging. Call 476-4921.

QI GONG CLASS: Millberry Programs & Services offers this class, 8:05-9:35 p.m., MU Fitness Center, Parnassus. Unblock tension and promote physical toning. To enroll, call Theresa Brand at 476-0350.

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY: David G. Hwang, associate professor, clinical ophthalmology, presents "Better Vision Now," 6 p.m., Beckman Vision Center, 8 Kirkham St. Hear about new surgery options for the correction of nearsightedness and astigmatism. Free. Call 476-5021.

15 tuesday

SEE'S CANDY SALE: Empact! Presents holds its annual candy sale today and tomorrow, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., MedSci Lobby, Parnassus.

16 wednesday

CANCER CENTER COOKING CLASS: Meredith McCarty presents "Splurge Without the Guilt!," 5:30-7:30 p.m., Ida's Cafe, 2356 Sutter St., 1st Flr. Cancer Center. Join the chef as she cooks up some delicious desserts using natural healthy ingredients, tailored to the needs of people living with or recovering from cancer. McCarty has taught cooking classes across the country and abroad since 1977 and is the author of several books, including "Fresh from a Vegetarian Kitchen" and "American Macrobiotic Cuisine." Sponsored by the Ida and Joseph Friend Cancer Resource Center at UCSF. To RSVP, call 885-3693.

17 thursday

MEDICAL GRAND ROUNDS: Kelly M. Skeff, associate professor of medicine and director, medicine residency program, Stanford University Medical Center, presents "Challenges to the Improvement of Clinical Teaching," noon-1 p.m., N 225, Parnassus. Sponsored by the department of medicine.

21 monday

SEE'S CANDY SALE: Empact! Presents holds its annual candy sale today and tomorrow, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., MedSci Lobby, Parnassus.

SHOP FOR GIFTS: Beanie Babies, gold jewelry and other items are on sale at half retail prices, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., City Lights Room, 500 Parnassus. Checks, credit cards accepted.

23 wednesday

MAMMOGRAPHY VAN: The UCSF van offers convenient breast cancer screening, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., UCSF Lakeshore Plaza, 1501 Sloat Blvd. The exam costs $75 and takes about 20 minutes. Written or verbal approval from a doctor is required. Call 353-3825.

24 thursday

CHRISTMAS EVE
UCSF HOLIDAY

25 friday

MERRY CHRISTMAS!
UCSF HOLIDAY

28 monday

MAMMOGRAPHY VAN: The UCSF van offers convenient breast cancer screening through Dec. 30, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., UCSF, Laurel Heights, 3333 California St. The exam costs $75 and takes about 20 minutes. Written or verbal approval from a doctor is required. Call 353-3825.

31 thursday

NEW YEAR'S EVE
UCSF HOLIDAY

JANUARY 1999

1 friday

HAPPY NEW YEAR!
UCSF HOLIDAY

6 wednesday

BROWN BAG LECTURE: Lynn Martin, coordinator, Brief Group Psychotherapy program and clinical research coordinator, LPPI outpatient services, presents "A New Year, a New You," 12:15 p.m., HSW 300, Parnassus. Learn how to overcome your fears and phobias. Sponsored by Public Service Programs. Call 476-4394.

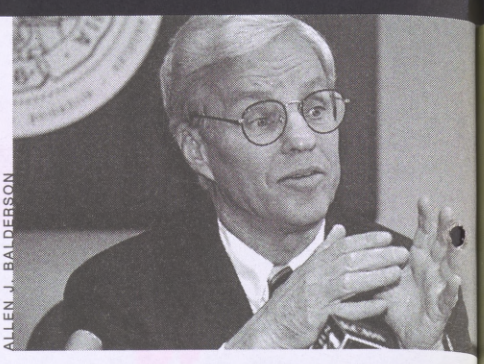
WOMEN'S HEALTH GRAND ROUNDS: Rita Redberg presents "Evaluation of Heart Disease in Women: Are There Gender Differences?" 5:30-7:30 p.m., UCSF/Mount Zion, Herbst Hall. Sponsored by the UCSF National Center of Excellence in Women's Health. For more information, call 885-7273 or visit the website at http://itsa.ucsf.edu/~ucs-fcoe.

7 thursday

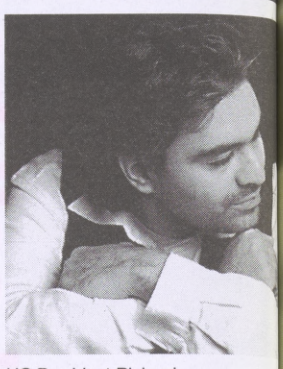
CHANCELLOR'S CONCERT SERIES: The popular classical music series founded by former Chancellor Haile Debas in l998 to enrich the quality of life at UCSF continues in 1999. Free performances held Thursdays, 12:15-12:45, Cole Hall, Parnassus. Violinist Kum Mo Kim is accompanied by Sharon Bogas on the cello and Roy Bogas on the piano as they perform "Smetana's piano trio, Op. 15."

8 friday

ABOG HOSTS UC PRESIDENT: See upcoming events for details.



ALLEN J. BALDERSON



UC President Richard Atkinson, top, will speak at a luncheon on Friday, Jan. 8, and Grammy-award winning tenor Andrea Bocelli will sing at a fundraiser on Wednesday, Jan. 13. See upcoming events below for details.

upcoming events

Tenor to raise hope for cancer

Andrea Bocelli, the Grammy award-winning opera singer and popular musician will make his first West Coast appearance at the second "Raising Hope" event hosted by the UCSF Foundation to benefit the UCSF Cancer Center on Wednesday, Jan. 13, at Davies Symphony Hall.

Bocelli, who has sold out overnight for every one of his performances throughout the world, will be accompanied by Ana Maria Martinez, soprano; Steven Mercurio, conductor; and The San Diego Symphony Orchestra.

The performance will be preceded by a formal black-tie dinner held in the newly refurbished San Francisco City Hall and followed by a post-performance dessert reception in the City Hall Rotunda.

Ticket prices range from $500 to $2,500. For more information and to purchase tickets, call 502-4337.

ABOG hosts UC President Atkinson

The Academic Business Officers Group (ABOG) kicks off the new year with a luncheon featuring UC President Richard C. Atkinson as guest speaker, on Friday, Jan. 8 from noon to 2 p.m., MU Gym, Parnassus.

Cost is $20 for ABOG members and $25 for non-members. Registration is required by Monday, Dec. 21 as space is limited.

Dean's research seminar

Robert W. Mahley, professor, pathology and medicine, director, Gladstone Institute of Cardiovascular Disease and senior member, CVRI and Lennart Mucke, associate professor, neurology and director, Gladstone Institute of Neurological Disease, present "Apolipoprotein E: From Atherosclerosis to Alzheimer's Disease," on Monday, Jan. 11, 3:30 p.m., N 225, Parnassus.

The seminar will be simulcast to UCSF/Mount Zion, Herbst Hall and VAMC, Bldg. 203, Rm. 1A32.

This series is an opportunity for faculty members to present their research to the campus in a forum broader than their own departmental seminars or grand rounds. Each seminar includes a clinical discussion and case presentation followed by a review of basic pathogenic mechanisms, reflecting a trend toward interdisciplinary translation research that is also manifested in some of the new programs, such as the Human Genetics Program and the Diabetes Center. Sponsored by the School of Medicine.

UCSF to celebrate MLK week

UCSF will celebrate its annual Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration Week beginning Tuesday, Jan. 19, with a series of events.

On Jan. 19, the campus will present the annual UCSF Martin Luther King Jr. Awards, honoring students, faculty and staff who have promoted diversity, from 2 to 4 p.m. in Cole Hall.

Dr. J. Alfred Smith Sr., pastor of the Allen Temple Baptist Church in Oakland, will be the speaker at a special lecture on Wednesday, Jan. 20 at noon in Cole Hall. The lecture will be simulcast at UCSF/Mount Zion, Mission Center, SFGHMC, VAMC and Laurel Heights.

On Thursday, Jan. 21, the Student Enrichment Series, open to the campus community, will present "Culturally Competent Care." Marie Fongwa, postdoctoral fellow, UCSF School of Medicine, will lead the discussion at noon in HSW 301.

Cole Hall Cinema will show "Beloved," at 5:45 and 9 p.m. on Jan. 21 and at 6:30 and 9:45 p.m. on Jan. 22.

The week will culminate on Friday, Jan. 23, with MLK celebrations at UCSF satellite locations. Times and events will be forthcoming.